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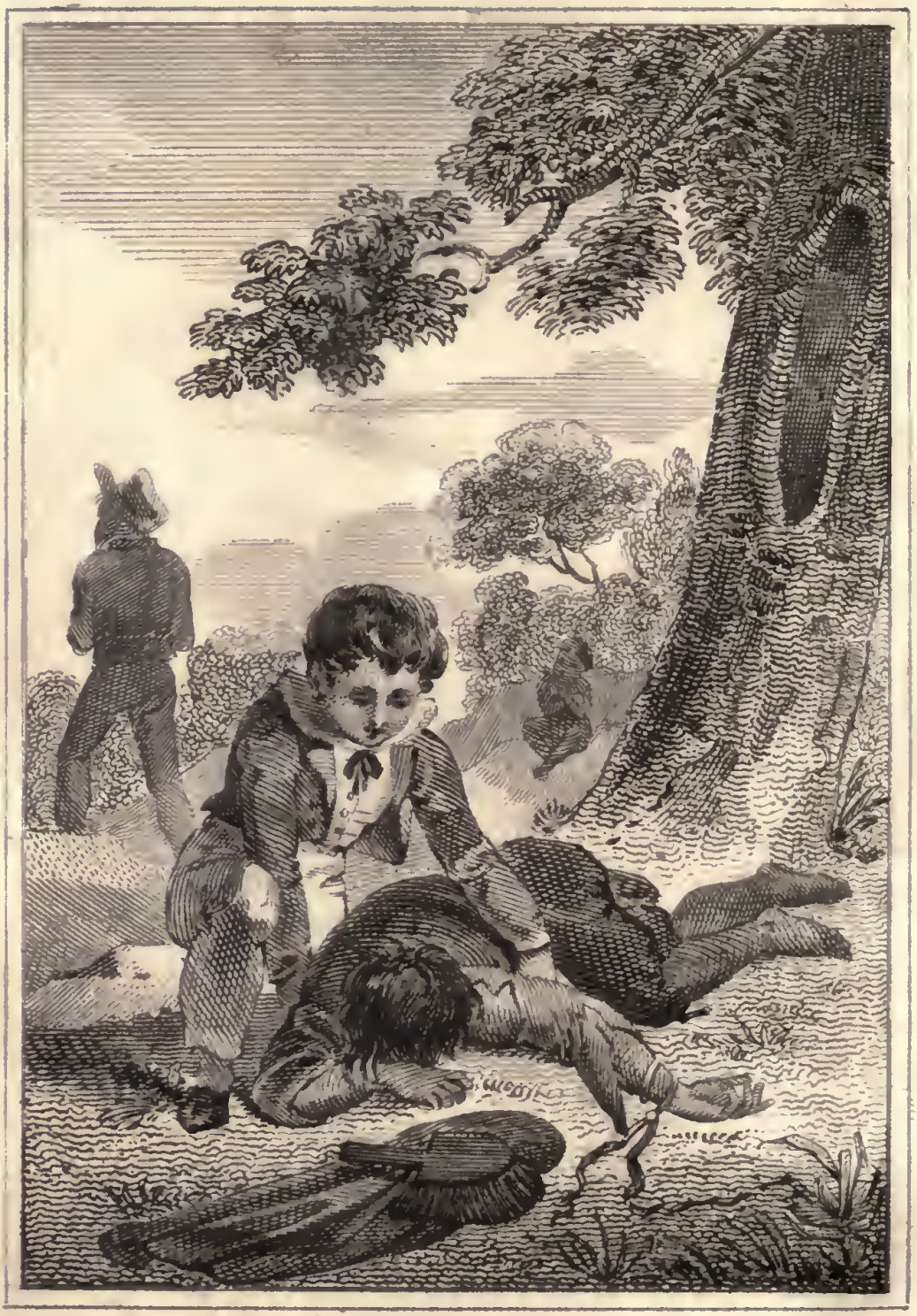
WILLIAM SEDLEY.



WILLIAM SEDLEY;

OR, THE

EVIL DAY DEFERRED.

By S. S.

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To Master ——

THE pleasure which you take in reading, made me solicitous to write a few pages for your amusement, when you wish to unbend your mind from more serious studies. But the want of opportunity, and the frequent interruptions which I met with during the course of them, have rendered the whole less worthy your acceptance than I had hoped, when

I first formed the design. My affection for you, incites me to wish your improvement in every branch of useful knowledge; and though this little work may be regarded as *trifling*, yet, the *moral* which it contains, is worthy your most serious attention. Do not, therefore, be too proud to receive instruction from its contents, because you have commenced acquaintance with Greek or Latin authors. It is from a superficial knowledge either of men or books, that we derive a supercilious contempt of the one,

or are critically nice in our judgment of the other. I would wish you, my dear boy, to form your taste on the most perfect models; but to profit by every thing which is praise-worthy in those authors who are less distinguished. Above all, you should remember, that to improve your *temper*, and to increase in *virtue* as well as *knowledge*, is the great end of all your studies; nothing which can promote this design, can be too low to merit your attention. That you may each day continue to advance in your progress towards

every thing which is great, generous, and manly, till you become an ornament of society, a blessing to your friends, and the delight of your indulgent parents, is the most earnest wish of,

Your affectionate Friend,

THE AUTHOR.

WILLIAM SEDLEY.

"IT is a delightful morning!" said a gentleman to a boy of about twelve years old, as he walked up and down an avenue with high trees on each side, which led to a handsome house. A coach drove, at that moment, out of the court-yard. "What a fine day!" repeated the gentleman; "I think, William, the roads will be extremely pleasant." William made no answer. The tears trickled down his cheeks, which he wiped away with the back of his hand.

A little chimney-sweeper had crept

along till he came to the place; and tossing down his bag of soot at the foot of a tree, stood gazing at the clothes of the young gentleman, and secretly wished he was but as happy. He beckoned to his companion, who sat at a little distance gnawing a stale crust, which he had received from the good-nature of a neighbouring farmer; and as he came forward, "Look Jack," said he, "what a fine coach that is, with those long tail nags: that boy is going to ride, I warrant; and yet he looks as sad as if he was one of us. I wonder what such fine folks can have to make them uneasy. If I was that boy, and had my belly-full, as he has, and such good clothes to my back, and might ride in that same coach, I should be as happy as a king. O how I wish I was that boy!"

William turned round at this speech, and smiling at the chimney-sweeper, asked him his name? The poor fellow, with a scrape of his foot, which he meant as a bow of respect, told him, that his name was Tony Climbwell; and that he lived at the next village. "Well then, Tony," replied William, "I would advise you not to envy every one you see; for I would willingly change places with you to enjoy your liberty. I am going back to school, Tony, after a month's holidays; and if you knew how unhappy I am when there, you would pity my situation; and not envy the joys of it."

The gentleman before mentioned, had gone into the house to inquire for his lady, who was to complete the party, and convey his son to

school. It was in this interval, that the following conversation passed between the two boys and the young gentleman.

"Indeed, master," replied Tony, "if we *could* change places, you would find you had made but a sorry choice. Our liberty, as you call it, is not to do as we like. To be sure, I am a very poor boy, and have had no learning; for I can neither read nor spell; but if I take it right, *liberty* means something such as to be your own master, don't it; at least, I know when Simon Pennyless was sent to gaol, people said, That the next week he would be set at liberty; and that was, that he was to be let out again. Now *we* go about every morning sweeping chimneys" ——"And walk," said William, interrupting him, "where you please

all the rest of the day. At our school we have scarcely any time for play, and are confined from six till eight, from nine till twelve, and from two till five o'clock, without any amusement whatever. Don't tell me, therefore, Tony, that our life is not much more uncomfortable than your's. Besides which, we have long tasks to learn after school-hours are over, and are thrashed and scolded if we cannot say them perfect; and then to think it will be *six* months before I see my father and mother!"——William wept again; the thought was too pathetic for his feelings; and he drew his fore-finger across his left eye, and then stroaked it the contrary way, to wipe off the drops which stood trembling in his right.—"But I have no father or mother," replied

Tony, "nor a single soul in the world to care what becomes of me, except my mistress, who is the best woman that ever lived; and would give me some victuals if she could; but she dares not for her own sake; for her husband is so cruel, that he would beat her if she did. He makes us work hard; and starves us into the bargain. This poor fellow," added he, pointing to his companion, "whom we call Little Shock, from his curling locks, is but six years old, and has been bound apprentice this twelvemonth; and I was no older myself when I first went to my master, which is near seven years ago; and I love the boy dearly, that I do, as much as if he was my own brother; and frequently do I get the broom thrown at my head, because I do not beat him when he

cries at going up a narrow chimney, or does not sweep it as he should do." "But is not your master *obliged* to give you food enough?" said William. "Why don't you complain to somebody? I would, if I was in your place." "Ah! Sir," replied the sooty-faced boy, "you talk like a gentleman, and know nothing of the matter. Whom would you have us complain to? And do not you think our master would use us much worse if we did? You wished just now to change places with us; but if you did, you would soon alter your mind."

As he pronounced these last words, the carriage which had been waiting, drove to a little distance, to make way for another coach, which then arrived. It contained a very venerable looking old gentleman, whom

William called his grandfather, and immediately left the chimney-sweepers to welcome; and with great expressions of joy accompanied him into the house. They were met in the hall by the gentleman and lady before-mentioned, whom I shall call by the name of Sedley. After the usual compliments were over, and they had informed their father, Mr. Graves, of their intention to take William to school, he begged a reprieve for him for a few days, as he much wished to enjoy the pleasure of his company. A compliance with this request dissipated the sadness of William's countenance; and he jumped about with a degree of vivacity that seemed to afford pleasure to all his friends.

Mr. Graves was one of those old men, whose features are always im-

pressed with such marks of good-nature as are pleasing to the volatile spirits of youth. Though he was turned of eighty, he would sometimes partake in the diversions of his grandson; and while his instructions commanded respect, his mildness and affability excited the warmest affection. When he had taken his afternoon's nap in an easy chair, which was placed in one corner of the room for that purpose, he got up, and after shaking his clothes, stroaking down his ruffles, and adjusting his wig, asked William if he was disposed for a walk.

They sallied out together, the invitation being willingly accepted. The good man taking his stick in one hand, and resting the other on the shoulder of his young companion, inquired whether he had had any

conversation with the black boys, with whom, at his arrival, he had found him engaged. William repeated the substance of what had passed; and concluded with saying, "He believed he *was* happier than honest Tony, though it must almost counterbalance all his sufferings to be exempted from the constant uneasiness of learning a task." "I am sorry," replied Mr. Graves, "that you have formed such a wrong estimate of your situation in life; and I should have expected, that the striking incident of this morning, would have taught you to be contented and thankful with the real happiness of your lot. Though I am a very old man, William, I have not forgotten what were my own troubles at your time of life. Study I often found to be irksome, and confine-

ment the heaviest of all evils; and therefore, I shall not preach to you, that you will never in future be so happy as you now are; because, if you feel yourself to be otherwise, you will pay little attention to such an assurance: but thus much I will say, and hope you will credit my experience, that all the uneasiness you complain of, may be *mitigated* if not entirely overcome, by your own diligence and resolution. It is by idleness and neglect, that your difficulties are increased. The more disagreeable you find your studies, the more you are disposed to postpone the necessary attention which they require. But this, my dear boy, is a very wrong method. The *beginning* of every attempt will always be irksome; but those who are too indolent to bestow a conti-

nued degree of care and assiduity, will never arrive at perfection. My William cannot be destitute of emulation; if he sees others excel, he must wish to equal their attainments. It is the meanest of human minds, that will *envy* another's merit; but the noblest disposition will endeavour to improve by a good example. Every state has its troubles. When you leave school, the *same* cares will not perplex you, but *others* equally severe may arise, which now you are unacquainted with. Have you not oftentimes been taught, that every period of life has its particular duties; and the duty of your age and station is to attend to the instructions of your masters, and to learn what they desire you, when they require it with cheerfulness?" "Then surely, Sir," replied William, "Tony

is in a happier state than I am, since he has no tasks to get by heart; and his *duty* of sweeping a chimney is easily performed. I should like to sweep a chimney of all things." "Perhaps you might," returned his grandfather. "Any thing will give us pleasure when we do it for amusement; but should you like to have the broom thrown at your head when you had done? or should you enjoy going without your meals, and strolling about in all weathers to beg from strangers the miserable supply to your hunger? It is very wrong to wish for a change of situation with any one, since none can be acquainted with the secret uneasiness of his neighbour's mind. Tony had some reason indeed to wish for your station in life; but even *he* would have been deceived;

for had he made the exchange, and been possessed of your inclinations with your fortune, he would still have found himself disappointed; since you esteemed yourself at that moment as the most unhappy being, in the necessity of returning to school, and was prevented by the error of your desires from any enjoyment of your superior advantages. This is a useful lesson, my child, to teach you contentment; for, believe me, though trials and temptations of the poor, are in most cases stronger than you can any ways imagine, if *you* are inclined, by a love of play, to leave your studies and desert your duty, reflect how often *they* may be tempted to steal from others those necessary comforts of which they stand in need; and how much they are exposed to the danger of becom-

ing wicked from the example of others, and their own ignorance! I should like to see your new chimney-sweeper acquaintance," continued Mr. Graves; "and though I do not approve of your mixing with such companions, I think you should not have left him without relieving his wants: perhaps he might have been very hungry, and has not had a good dinner since, as you have, to satisfy his appetite."

William was backward and somewhat stupid at his learning, but he wanted not sense; and his tenderness and good-nature were uncommon.

"Poor fellow," said he, "your arrival and the joy of seeing you, made me forget him; but I will find out where he lives, and do all I can to make amends for my forgetful-

ness.—Dear Sir, will you go with me? it is not a long way; we are now in sight of the village." "Though the distance is not very great," replied Mr. Graves, "yet the winding path which leads to it, is farther than I can reach without fatigue. I will therefore rest myself upon the stump of this tree, and shall be entertained in your absence with the prospect of the country: the view of which, from this eminence, is delightful."

William set off, with a degree of swiftness that promised a speedy return; but he had not proceeded far, when he was met by a Jew, who sold trinkets of various sorts; as buttons, watch-chains, pencils, and such like things. He offered his wares to William, who at first refused to purchase them; but the

man telling him he might as well look at, if he did not buy them ; he was tempted to ask the price of an ivory bilberkit, for which he paid a shilling. A small looking-glass was a thing he had long wished for ; and as that was the same expense, he debated for a considerable time before he could determine which of the two to make choice of. One moment he began to play with the toy, and the next surveyed himself in the glass. Alternately taking them up and laying them down, till the owner, who saw his eagerness for both, persuaded him to have them.

He was walking slowly on, with his purchase in his hand, when a butcher's boy, and a lad who was driving some cows from the field to be milked, overtook him with a nest of blackbirds, in which were four

young ones. William asked what they would take for their prize? which they at first refused to sell; but afterwards said, he should have it for a shilling. He objected that it was too much; and taking out his money, found that he had only half a guinea, which had been given him to take to school, and which, therefore, he did not choose to change, and nine-pence halfpenny, for which the boys agreed at last he should have the blackbirds.

Once more then he proceeded in his journey to look for Tony. He soon found the house and his black acquaintance with a young child, whom he was teaching to walk. They renewed their intimacy, and William told him the design of his *visit*; but coloured with confusion when he recollected the situation of his money,

which he had never thought of when he was making his bargains. He did not at all like to own the true state of the case, nor did he know what method to pursue. He wished to keep his gold for many reasons, and he had beside, neither silver nor copper. His *conscience* urged him to give Tony something; but he had pleased himself greatly with the thought of having a half guinea in his pocket, which he could call his own. His sensibility represented the wants of the orphan boy; but the pride of having a piece of *gold* in his possession, overcame every consideration of pity. "If you will call to-morrow at our house, Tony," said he, "you shall have some bread and meat.—Good bye, I cannot stay any longer!" And away he went,

with the uneasy consciousness of having behaved wrong.

He was on his return to his grandfather, when Jeffery Squander and his sister, who were taking a walk, met him as he was crossing by the end of a lane. They had stopped to buy some plum-cakes of a man with one leg, who made it his business to carry them about. Jeffery and William were neighbours and schoolfellows, and immediately saluted each other; the former inciting the other to follow his example. He refused at first, because he had no money; but was very unwilling to make known his real reason. Upon being pressed still farther, he said, "he had nothing but gold about him, which he supposed Jonathan, the cake man, could not give him change for,

otherwise he should be glad to eat some." Jonathan felt in a leathern bag, which was fastened before him, and divided in the middle to hold silver and halfpence, and said, "he had money enough for the purpose." William was sadly disappointed; but as he could urge no farther objection, gave up his dear half-guinea with regret, and eat three plum-cakes with a worse appetite than usual.

Mr. Graves, in the mean time, had walked onward in quest of his grandson, whose stay began to give him some uneasiness. He came up with him just as he was finishing his last mouthful, and gently blamed him for the length of his absence, at the same time inviting his companions to join him, and to return to Mr. Sedley's. They po-

litely declined his offer, as they were engaged to spend the evening with an uncle.

As soon as they had taken leave, Mr. Graves inquired after the success of William's visit. "You made me quite uneasy," said he, "I hope you have done a *great deal* of good. How much did you give honest Tony? or had you as much money as you wanted? I forgot to make that inquiry, you set off in such a hurry."—William blushed, hung down his head, slackened his pace, and slunk behind his grandfather in silent confusion.—Mr. Graves turned round, and taking his hand, "What has happened, my boy," said he, "to cover that open countenance with the suspicious appearance of guilt? Or do I injure you my noble child, and is it only the blush of your

modesty at the inquiry of your generosity?" "Indeed Sir," said William, "I feel the keenness of your reproof. But if my honesty in confessing can excuse my fault, you shall be acquainted with the whole truth. I went from you with a full design to relieve poor Tony; but I soon overtook a Jew pedlar, and I was so weak as to spend my money in the purchase of this glass, and that bilberkit. Nine-pence I had still left; and nine-pence would have been something for the chimney-sweeper! but this bird's nest which I have in my handkerchief, I am ashamed of myself, Sir, but I gave that to the boys for the birds." "And was that all your money?" said Mr. Graves. "Did you not pay for the cakes you were eating?" "Yes, Sir," replied William.

"Then why had you nothing for the boy?" again inquired his grandfather. "Because," returned William, blushing still more, "I did not like to change half a guinea: nor should I have done it, had not Squander seemed to think it mean of me, and I was afraid he would laugh at my stinginess when we return to school: for he has always so much money, that he does not care how much he spends." "The frankness of your acknowledgment," replied Mr. Graves, "must entirely shield you from reproof; and you seem to be so sensible of your error, that I need not, perhaps, point it out with any further aggravations. I would not tire you with my advice, and yet I feel such an interest in your happiness as makes me wish to observe the improvement which may arise

from any incident that occurs. Young people are apt to pass over every action without reflection; and when a day is once concluded, they think no more of their behaviour during the course of it. Our lives, my dear William, are made up of *trifling* accidents; but if we incur guilt by behaving improperly, the future misery of an uneasy conscience will be ill repaid by the enjoyment of any present pleasure. You should always, therefore, be upon your guard; since you see an occasion to draw you into error, may arise where you least expect it. To purchase the toys, or to buy the birds as the naughty boys had taken the nest was not wrong; though if you know where they got it, I should hope you would replace it. But when you had only that two shillings and

nine-pence, I think some part of it ought to have been saved for the purpose on which you set out. But then, William, a worse part of your conduct is still to come. You were convinced that it was *right*, that it was your *duty*, to do something for Tony; yet you left him without relief: while the fear of being *laughed* at by so silly a fellow as Jeffery Squander, had more effect upon you than your pity for your fellow creature, a boy of your own age in want. This weakness, I am much afraid, will often lead you into danger. Wicked people will laugh at you for being better than themselves; but will by no means like to share in the miseries which your follies may incur."

As he concluded these words, they arrived within sight of Mr. Sedley's house, and were soon dis-

covered by two children who were kneeling in the parlour window; but immediately upon seeing Mr. Graves, they jumped down, and came running to meet him. The eldest was a girl about a year older than William; and the other, little Bob, had the day before left off his petticoats, and honoured his birth-day with a suit of new boy's clothes.

Miss Sedley and her little brother had both been to dine with a neighbouring gentleman, in consequence of their parents intention of conveying their son to school; which the reader has already heard Mr. Graves's arrival had postponed. They both expressed their joy at the sight of their grandfather who took Bob in his arms to kiss him; while Nancy, with a smile of delight, pressed her brother's hand. and assured him of

the pleasure she felt that she should have his company a few days longer.

Bob was so impatient, in the mean time, to show his dress, that setting both his feet against his grandfather's stomach, he very nearly pushed himself backwards. "Look, Sir," said he, "Pray look at my buttons! I shall *soon* be a man now. I was four years old yesterday; and see, I have got a pocket to my waistcoat; and this is my new handkerchief." "Well," said the old gentleman, "I will see them all presently, but let me set you down first; you had very near tumbled us both on the grass; and you are very heavy, I can tell you, in your new clothes." "I dare say I am," returned Bob. "To be sure, Sir, I am too big to be lifted now I am in breeches; and besides, I have got money in my

pocket; so it is no wonder I am heavy, for Mr. Goodwill, the clergyman, gave me six-pence yesterday afternoon, because he said I was such a good boy, that he was sure I should take care and spend it properly.—And see what a nice one it is, Sir!" Mr Graves took it in his hand, and admiring it greatly, gave it to little Bob, who turned it about with much pride and pleasure as he walked along, till it unfortunately dropped down upon the grass, and was lost from his sight. "O stop! stop!" said he in a hurry, "my six-pence! my own dear new six-pence! what shall I do?" and immediately fell upon his hands and knees in search of his treasure. William did the same, and Nancy stooped forward to assist them; while their grandfather pushed about the grass with his stick,

in hopes by that mean to discover it. Their endeavours, for a long time, were in vain, and Bob's impatience became so great, that he burst into tears.

"Do not cry, my love," said his sister, "I have got a six-pence which my papa gave me last Thursday when I finished his shirts, and you shall have that." "But it is bent and ugly," replied he: "It is not a *new* one: I do not like it: It is an ugly one.—O my pretty six-pence! what shall I do for it?" "Not be a naughty boy! I hope, Robert," said Mr. Graves: "you told me just now, you were almost a man; but this behaviour, and these tears, look like a baby. I think Nancy is very kind to you; and I am ashamed to see you make such a return to her good-nature. However there is

your six-pence," continued he, putting his stick close to it." Bob jumped at it, and picking it up, kissed it most heartily, saying, "I am glad you are found: I will put you in my pocket, and never take you out again when I am walking." They soon reached the house; and found Mr. and Mrs. Sedley waiting tea for them: to whom Mr. Graves gave an account of their walk. During their conversation two gentlemen, who were riding by, stopped their horses, and looked up at the house. Mr. Sedley got up, and walking to the window with his cup lifted to his mouth, and the saucer in his left hand, "I wonder what those gentlemen are looking for," said he. "They seem to have mistook their way." "O no! Papa," replied Bob, "I dare say they only stand

still to look at my new clothes. They are surprised I suppose to see me in breeches." "Upon my word, child," said his father, "you think yourself now of prodigious consequence; but it is very silly and unlike the man you wish us to think you, to talk so much of your dress.—Your brother's behaviour," added he, turning to Miss Sedley, "puts me in mind of the little girl we met one day at Mr. Wilmot's. Do not you remember her, Nancy? I think she was called Miss Gaudery: with her red silk slip, and fine gold watch. She looked so stiff as if afraid to stir. She would not walk in the garden for fear it should spoil her shoes; nor sit close to her companions, that she might not tumble her cuffs; nor would she eat any strawberries, because if one happened to drop, it

would stain her apron. In short, all her attention was so evidently fixed upon her fine clothes, that she incurred the contempt of the company; who all agreed it was much to be lamented, that her mind should be neglected for the sake of adorning her person. I know that dress is a very favourite subject with girls. 'And what pretty thing have you got?' says one; 'and let me see your new cap,' says another, when you have play-fellows come to see you. Is not that true, Nancy? And then you pull out your band-boxes; 'and this is my cloak;' 'and this is my furbelowed apron;' 'and here is my flounced petticoat;' 'and that is my feathered bonnet;' 'and in this drawer I put my shawl.'—Tell me, Nancy, is not that the way you entertain and are entertained by

your visitors?" "Those with whom I am intimate," replied Miss Sedley blushing, "I sometimes show my new clothes to; but I do not wear half of those things you have named: it would look strange indeed to see a little girl in a furbelowed apron; at least, I am sure we should not call it by that name. But pray, Sir, inform me whether you think there is any thing wrong in this practice, and I will not do it for the future?" "I not mean, my dear," returned her father, "to blame that good nature which would engage you to please your companions with the sight of a new acquisition; but to warn you from the danger of a vain temper, which is proud of fancied finery, and imagines its worth to consist in the smartness of dress rather than in real goodness. And I address myself to

you upon this subject; because, I think, that in general, girls are apt to show a greater tendency to this failing than boys: but I hope my Nancy has too much good sense to be proud of any thing which reflects no honour upon herself, but as she behaves properly, and makes a right use of the advantage of fortune. The pleasure which Bob has expressed in his new coat, has not arisen from its being finer than his other clothes, but because he looks upon himself as so much more like a *man* than he was before; but it is a certain proof from his speaking so much about them, that it is a new thing to him; otherwise he would have thought no more of the circumstance than does your brother William. So when a girl is dressed out to make a visit, and takes particular

notice of her ruffles, or her frock, or any other part of her dress, you may almost always be sure she is not accustomed to it. You do not look at those shoes, nor think of that cap, because you usually wear them; and you should endeavour to be as easy in your behaviour in your *best* as in your *common* garb; otherwise you appear stiff and ungraceful, and will lose every advantage which your dress is designed to produce. But above all, my girl, remember, that good nature, affability and sweetness of manners, is the charm to render you agreeable; and will always have the power of pleasing, independent of outward decorations." "I hope," said Mrs. Sedley, "that our Nancy's good sense will secure her from an error which is the strongest mark of an uninformed mind. She has just

favoured me with the sight of a little poetic piece, which was occasioned by the behaviour of the child you have mentioned; and as you are so well acquainted with the author, I dare say she will oblige you with the perusal. Mr. Sedley expressed his wishes to that purpose, and his daughter immediately fetched them down, and presented them to her father, who read as follows:

'TWAS when the harvest first began,
The sky was clear, the air serene,
The rustics to their toil repair'd,
And Julia join'd the rural scene.

(Julia was fair with ev'ry grace,
Which art or nature can bestow;
But still her most engaging charms
From *modesty* and *sweetness* flow.

Nor *dress* nor beauty *claim'd* her care,
But objects of a *nobler* kind;

For well she knew *interior* worth
Is ever seated in the *mind*.

Hence was she studious to acquire
Distinction worthy of her claim;
For learning, genius, virtue, sense,
She strove to win the prize of fame.)

With *her* a youthful band appear'd;
And blooming Richard led the way,
Who smiling as the nymphs advanc'd,
He seated on the new-mown hay.

One only lass among the rest
His offer'd hand with scorn disdain'd;
And fir'd with *vanity* and *pride*
Thus angry to her friends complain'd:

" And do you think for this I came
In all my *elegant* array,
Only to treat yon rustic set,
And let *their* eyes my *dress* survey?

D'ye think this slip was e'er design'd
Upon the dirty *hay* to rest?
Or that for such a *vulgar* scheme
I paid the visit in my *best*?

What! my *best* shoes, my *feather'd* cap,
My *new* calash, forget them all;
And like the toiling wretches there
Consent upon the *hay* to sprawl?

Rise! ladies, rise! and quit the field:
I vow I blush to see you there:—
For shame! such *mean* companions leave,
And to the *drawing room* repair.

O fie! Miss Julia, do you smile,
And really like such *vulgar* play?
At least you'll dirt or spoil your frock,
If longer you presume to stay."

"Hey-day!" quoth Richard in reply,
"I really know not my offence—
What! does the *dirt* on this dry hay,
The *dirt*, Miss Flavia, drive you hence?

The *feathers* in your *cap*, indeed,
I had not notic'd much before;
And the *red shoes* so bright and gay,
I now their pardon must implore.

But if, dear Miss, they *soil* so soon,
I wish some others you had brought;

As all our party to confine
On their account you kindly thought.

But now that we have seen your *best*,
At the *next* visit which you pay;
I hope that you will suit your *dress*
To a soft seat among the *hay*."

Displeas'd, and frowning, up she rose,
And *sullenly* the rest forsook;
No answer she vouchsaf'd to give,
But darted fury in her look.

All her companions laugh'd aloud,
With ridicule and just disdain,
Except that Julia kindly fear'd
To give her haughty bosom pain.

" My brother," mildly she rejoin'd,
" Your warmth will much offend, I fear;
We should for others faults allow,
Nor be in judgment too severe.

If *better* taught, the *real* worth
Of *dress* or *fortune* we may know,
Our pity should extend to those,
Who on these *toys* their care bestow.

Consider that in such array
Poor Flavia does but seldom shine;
Then let us not, my friends, insult,
Tho' *ignorance* with *pride* combine.

Ours be the care with modest ease,
The goods of *fortune* to possess;
Nor with mean arrogance of mind
Exult o'er others who have less."

"Thank you, my dear," said Mr. Sedley, when she had concluded. "These lines, I see, are the production of Dick Wilmot, as he has signed them. You must know Sir," added he, addressing Mr. Graves, "that our young friend discovers a propensity to the Muses, and often employs his leisure in the composition of such little pieces. But he has made too long a parenthesis at the beginning, which is only excusable from the laudable motive of praising a sister, who is

one of the most accomplished and best tempered girls I am acquainted with. The design of a parenthesis is only to include a short sentence in a long one, and therefore should not be too long itself, as the sense of the author ought to be complete without it. But when it is extended to too great a length, we forget the foregoing passage, and the continuation of the subject appears awkward and perplexing." "But if the sense is as good without, then what is its use?" said Miss Sedley. "It is sometimes by way of explanation, my dear," replied he, taking up a book from the table: "as thus, "Alexander reaped great advantage from the fine taste with which his master (than whom no man possessed greater talents for the education of youth) had inspired

him from his infancy." "Now perhaps the reader might not be acquainted with the character of Alexander's master; and this commendation of him will inform him, that he was a man of abilities, and therefore better qualified for his employment; and yet the sense would have been perfect without this addition. But it sometimes is likewise used as an exception. Suppose I was to say, you shall all go to Windsor to-morrow (except little Bob) to see the castle and the royal family." —"O! but pray do not leave *me* at home," said Robert, starting up from the ground, where he had been sitting spinning his six-pence on the carpet. "Pray, Sir, take me with you, and *I* will show you some verses as well as my sister." "Will you?" replied Mr. Sedley; "and pray

where did you get them? but I am not going to Windsor: I was only teaching Nancy the use of a parenthesis." "Was *that* all?" cried Bob in a tone of disappointment, "But you shall see the poetry however. I have it in my *pocket*," with an emphasis he pronounced the word. "My brother gave it to me yesterday. They were inscribed,"

To Master ROBERT SEDLEY, *on his* BIRTH-DAY.

PERMIT me now, my dearest boy,
Again to wish you ev'ry joy
On this your natal day:
Now cast your former clothes aside,
To dress with more becoming pride
In *masculine* array.

And, Robert, sure with *manly* air,
You'll hence each *infant* trick forbear,
And scorn the sense of pain:

Ne'er whimper tho' to earth you fall,
Break a new *cart* or lose your *ball*,
Nor like a *child* complain.

But learn to *speak*, and learn to *read*,
And your own cause distinctly plead,
And be asham'd to *cry*;
Or, trust me, else they will restore
The *baby's petticoats* once more,
And on the *back-string* tie.

The next morning was as fine as the preceding one; and William and his sister rose in high spirits with the idea of spending the day together.

When the family assembled to breakfast, Mr. Graves proposed to take them to dine with a friend of his at Windsor, but without excepting little Bob, who begged to be of the party. After a very pleasant ride they arrived at Mr. Rich's, who received them with great affability and politeness. They found there seve-

ral play-fellows, as Mr. Rich had a son and daughter; and there were two young ladies and a young gentleman, who had been likewise invited to dine with them. The name of the eldest was Miss Lofty: the other Miss Snap; and the boy was called Master Tradewell.

As it was early when they arrived, Mr. Sedley, Mrs. Rich, and the young folk, took a walk to see the castle, with which they were all highly entertained. On their return they met with a pretty girl, who was running along with a basket of apples, and who stumbling over a loose stone in her way, fell down with great violence on the pavement. William and his sister immediately hastened to her assistance, and very tenderly inquired whether she was hurt; at the same time assisted her

to gather up the fruit, which she seemed much concerned about, as the pippins had rolled to a great distance. "How far were you going, Fanny," said Mrs. Rich. "Don't be frightened, my child; your apples are not the worse, and your mother will not be angry." "They were for you, Ma'am," replied she, courtesying and weeping, "and I was charged to make haste; but I am sure I could not *help* falling." "To be sure you could not," returned the lady; "and as you are a good girl, you may stay and dine at our house if you please." Fanny thanked her, and promised to ask her mother's leave so to do. Mrs. Rich then informed her company, that the child they had seen was daughter to a servant of theirs, who had married a gardener, and whose

good behaviour recommended her so much, that she frequently came to play with her children.

In the afternoon the young party retired to amuse themselves in the garden; and Miss Rich asked them if it would be agreeable for Fanny Mopwell to be with them? William said, "by all means;" and Nancy was quite pleased with the proposal: but Miss Lofty bridled up her head, and said, "she had never been *used* to play with such *creatures*:" and Master Tradewell said, "he thought they were better *without* her; for a *merchant's* son was rather above a girl of that sort."

Tom Rich, who had loved Fanny from her infancy, and whose mother had been his nurse, was not a little offended at the scorn which they expressed for his favourite, and very

angrily told Miss Lofty, "that if she was *poor* she was *good-natured*, and would not refuse to oblige any body." William also joined heartily in her favour; for he was of such a gentle disposition, that he always wished to promote the happiness of every one he saw; and Nancy seconded him with great ardor. Upon this mighty question, a warm debate ensued. Miss Snap said, "she did not care for the *girl*, but she had no patience to have her *play* so interrupted." Charlotte Rich, who was a school-fellow of Miss Lofty's, began to be ashamed of having asked her to take notice of such a humble companion; and though she was in her heart very fond of little Fanny, yet she felt her pride hurt at having shown her such a degree of regard. So forcibly does a bad example often

operate upon a mind which would be otherwise not ungenerous.

During the dispute, the innocent cause of it happened to pass by; and Fanny, with a modest courtesy, asked Miss Rich how she did? To which question the foolish girl, for the reason above-mentioned, would not condescend to give her an answer. As she was a child of great sensibility, she was a little distressed by the contempt which Charlotte affected. She knew too well the duties of her station to offer to put herself upon an equality with the other young ladies; but as she was always accustomed to be treated by Miss Rich with the freedom of an equal, she felt her contempt as a hardship to which she had not been used. She hung down her head, and was walking silently away, when

Tom took hold of her gown, and inquired whither she was going? desiring her to stay with him and his friend William, adding, "that Miss Sedley and Bob should be of their party; and they would leave the proud boarding-school *ladies*, since that was their title, to keep company with the *merchant*'s son."

Miss Lofty, who was daughter of a nobleman, replied, "that a *merchant*'s son was no better than a *tradesman;* and she was not over fond of your *city* gentry." This speech equally offended Master Tradewell and Miss Snap; who, rouzed at the indignity offered to her rank, declared, "she always heard, that a *gentleman* of *fortune* was as good as a *Lord;* and her father, who was an *Alderman,* was known, though a grocer, to be worth

thousands and thousands of pounds, and therefore she did not understand such treatment." In short, the disagreement ran so high, that Miss Snap could not be persuaded to play at all; and when the rest of the disputants had agreed to make up matters, she would accept of no proposal, nor join in any diversion which they offered to her choice. During the latter part of the engagement, Master Sedleys, with their sister and Tom, had accompanied Fanny to an arbour at some distance, where they quietly sat down to play. Her goodnature inclined her always to give way to her companions; and she had been taught to do whatever her superiors desired (if it was not wrong) so that they found her a most agreeable and entertaining girl, and rejoiced that they had admitted her

to be of their party. Among the rest of their amusements, it was proposed that they should each tell a story for the entertainment of the rest; and as none of the others could immediately recollect one, Fanny was desired to begin, which she very readily did in the following manner, out of a little book which she had in her pocket.

"John Active was a very good sort of man, and was beloved by his neighbours. He was kind to every body; and would always help those who were in distress. As he had a good trade (though it was a laborious one) he got a pretty fortune; and he did not mind the fatigue, for the sake of providing for his family. His wife too was a worthy woman, and always took care to have things ready against he came home, re-

ceived him with good-humour, and thanked him for the trouble he took in getting the money to keep her and her children. They had three daughters; whose names were Nanny, Susan, and Kate; and she taught them to read and work; and when they were gone to bed, would sit up to mend their clothes, and do what was necessary for them. While they were young, this family all lived extremely comfortable. The parents were contented and thankful for their condition; and the children were as happy as it was in their power to make them. But when they grew older, and ought to have known better, the two eldest became perverse and disobedient. They would not mind what they were taught; and only grumbled and found fault if they were set to work.

In short, they became so obstinate, that they at all times did the contrary to what their parents desired: Susan one day in jumping from the top of a gate, which she had often been forbid to do, broke her leg, an accident that confined her a great while, and cost her father a vast deal of money for surgeons; and her mother in lifting her about, got a hurt in her back, which never could be cured, and occasioned her to be lame all the rest of her life. Any body would have thought that such an accident might have taught the naughty girl to have been more obedient for the future; but she was unmoved by it; and added to the trouble of nursing her, by being cross and dissatisfied; and poor Mrs. Active would often shed tears at the unkind speeches which she returned for her

care and indulgence. Nor did Nancy afford them any greater comfort. She would never assist in those things of which she was capable: but was mighty eager to do what was out of her power.

"One day when her sister was better, her mother desired them both to run the seams of a bed curtain, which she was making; and begged them to make haste, as she wanted to finish it before night. They both looked sullen at her request. Nancy said, 'it was not her *business*; and her father might sleep without curtains:' and Susan replied, 'that though her leg was mended she would not do all the *drudgery* indeed.' While little Kate, who was much younger, threaded a needle, and began to take one of them into her lap, though it was so large she

could hardly manage it. Mrs. Active told them to consider their father had a bad cold; and as it was a very severe frost, and a windy night, it would certainly make him worse. So after she had insisted upon it, they snatched up the work, and pulled out their needles with such passion and ill-humour as to break the thread at every stitch. Susan, who had got a book to amuse her, and who sat with her back to her mother, put it into her lap, and kept reading the whole time, without paying any regard to what she said; and long before the usual hour of going to bed, both sisters pretended they were so sleepy they could not keep awake, left their work unfinished, put on their night caps, and went away.

"As Susan's book was very en-

tertaining, they sat up in their own room to finish reading it; but thinking they heard Mrs. Active upon the stairs, they hastily popped the candle into the closet, and with their clothes on jumped into bed. As they heedlessly put it upon an under shelf, it burnt a hole through the one which was over it, where catching to some linen, it soon set the closet in a blaze. This did not happen for some hours after they had left it, they having lain still for fear of being found out, and not thinking of the danger, fell asleep, while the flames burnt through to Mr. Active's room, which was adjoining to theirs; and it was with the greatest difficulty that they were saved, he having but just time to rush in at the hazard of his own life, and carry them down stairs in his arms. But the house

for want of water, as it was in a country place, was entirely consumed; nor did they save any thing, not even so much as clothes to cover them."

When Fanny had read thus far, her audience were obliged to separate upon a summons to tea. They were all extremely sorry, as they wished to hear a conclusion to her story; and William begged her to lend him the book that he might finish it at home. This proposal Fanny did not much approve, but at length, upon a promise of his returning it by Master Rich before he went to school, she entrusted it to his care, charging him to keep it clean, and not take the paper off the cover.

In their way home, the young folk entertained Mr. Graves with an ac-

count of their days amusement, and bestowed great praise on Fanny's good-nature, at the same time that they blamed the haughty manners of Miss Lofty and her companions. "Your observations, my dear children," replied their grandfather, "give me the highest pleasure, as there is nothing more truly contemptible than that pride which arises from the possession of wealth and finery. The poor are a more useful set of people than the rich; since to their industry we must owe all those distinctions that form the conveniences and luxuries of life. And though the difference of station was appointed for the wisest ends; yet it is our duty to behave with kindness to our inferiors, and not subject them to unnecessary mortifications. A prudent person will always endea-

vour to keep such company as may suit his rank, because it is an error to associate only with those beneath us, as we cannot learn from them such qualifications which are essential to be known; but a *good* mind will at all times pay a tender regard to the feelings of those in poverty and distress, because it is an act of cruelty and oppression to insult any who are in circumstances less happy than ourselves. Instead, therefore, of being proud on account of your family and fortune, you should be thankful to Providence that you will have it in your power to assist others; and remember, that the higher your rank, and the greater share of wealth you may possess, so much the more it is necessary to set a good example; as God will expect more from you in consequence of such advantages,

than from those who by having fewer opportunities of instruction, are not so well acquainted with their duty. Every incident, my dears, may afford you some useful lesson, if you accustom yourselves to reflect seriously; and this afternoon has taught you by experience, that the benefit of a good education, the finery of dress, and the distinction of noble connexions, are altogether insufficient to engage your love or respect; while the superior charms of good-nature and good sense have in the humble Fanny found means to win your regard. Remember then, for the future to cultivate in yourselves the internal graces of a generous disposition; and let the pride and folly of Miss Lofty and Master Tradewell, be a warning to you to shun their errors. Every degree of grandeur and os-

tentation can be but comparative. If *you* despise the poverty of Fanny, or the inferior fortune of your acquaintance Sam Ivy; Sir Thomas Young, or your school-fellow lord Newson, may look down upon *you* with equal contempt; because they have already each a title to boast, and have larger estates to expect than yourself: and as you would dislike to be treated with disdain by *them*, remember others have equal sensibility: and always judge by your own feelings, what is the course of action you should pursue; since, to *do* as we would be *done* by, is a rule of the greatest importance in life. Master Tradewell could but ill bear the scorn with which Miss Lofty treated a mercantile employment, though he had joined in her haughty behaviour

to Fanny Mopwell. And those who are most ready to give offence to others, can in general the least submit to such insolence themselves; because, knowing their own want of more valuable endowments, and thinking such a vain superiority of the highest consequence, they are mortified in proportion to their pride, and suffer the just punishment of their arrogance in the folly which causes their distress." William thanked his grandfather for his good advice, to which they had all listened with great attention: and then retired to bed, with the satisfaction of having behaved well during the course of the day. As soon as he conveniently could the next morning, he went into his sister's room, and taking Fanny's book from his pocket, they both sat

down in one chair, with his arm round her neck; and began to read the continuation of the story as follows:

"Mr. Active and his family were now left exposed to the greatest distress. One of his legs had been terribly burnt in getting his daughters down stairs; and the loss of their house and furniture it was out of their power ever to repair. Several of the neighbours were so kind as to give them a few clothes for the present; and the gentlemen of the parish, out of regard to his merit, made a subscription for him, and gave him some money for his immediate relief. With this assistance they took as cheap a lodging as they could procure; but were obliged to live very differently from their usual manner. The poor man, though he went out to work, could

earn but little, his leg growing worse for want of proper assistance; and the fright of the fire had had such an effect on his wife, that she never was well after. In this state of poverty the money which had been given them was soon spent; and though many persons had pitied them at the time, yet their sufferings were now forgot, and nobody thought any more about them. Nanny and Susan, though their undutiful behaviour had been the cause of all the misfortunes which they suffered, still continued to be ill-tempered and untractable. They were discontented with their situation, and grumbled at the hardship to which they were reduced; and though their mother had got some work to employ them, yet they were so idle that they neglected to do it, notwithstanding they were starving

for want. Poor Kate, indeed, did what she could; and though she was but young, proved of great assistance to her mother. "I will do all I am able," she would say, "and do not grieve, for in time we shall have more money I hope." And when she saw there was but little for dinner, she would not eat what she wanted, in order to leave it for her parents. Sometimes she would talk to her sisters, and advise them to behave better. "I am sure," she has said, "we owe a great deal to our father and mother for their care; and as they have worked hard for *us*, it is but reasonable that we in our turn should try to support *them*." The two elder sisters were at length provided for, by getting into place, and going to service. Nanny was taken by a grocer's wife to nurse a young

child and go of her errands, and whatever else she was capable of doing: and Susan went to a farmer's in the neighbourhood as an assistant in the family. It fell to her lot to carry milk every morning to a gentleman who lived near the place where her sister was settled; and she used frequently to meet her there, and stay and talk to her a little. They pursued this custom for some time without any bad intention; but one day, as the place where they stood happened to be close to a pastry-cook's shop, they were tempted by the sight of some hot buns to go in and buy one between them. They found the taste so delicious, that they would gladly have eaten more; but considering the cost would be what they could not well afford, they parted for that time, with a mutual

agreement to meet the next day at the same house, and renew their treat.

" Nanny's business would not permit her to be there so early as her sister, who after having waited at the door for some time, entered the shop by herself, and bought a penny custard, which she had just finished eating, when Susan arrived, and with much pleasure informed her, that a gentleman had given her a shilling for her trouble in waiting upon him during his stay at her Master's; and she wanted to consult her in what manner she should lay it out. " Suppose," added she, " I should carry it to my mother, it is the first money I have had, and she is in great distress?" " Why, yes," replied Susan, " they do want money at home; and so after you have eaten one of these

plum-cakes let us go: I would have bought one before had I been able to pay for it." "Well! but," returned Nanny, "then I must change the shilling, and that will be a pity: to carry only eleven-pence will not look half so well, and we had better go without our cakes: we have both had a good dinner, and perhaps they have not fared so well: I think it would be kinder to let them have it." So saying, she was going to leave the shop, when the pastry-cook's boy passed by her with a tray full of hot cheesecakes. They smelt so delicious, that Nanny wished very much to taste them; and her sister joining in the same inclination, added, "we shall often have a *shilling* given us now we are in service: it is but a trifle! what would a shilling buy? My mother will not

expect it; and therefore will not be hurt, or vexed about it: come, come, do not stand thinking any longer." "To be sure they are very nice," said Nanny, and took up one in her hand.—It broke!—What was to be done? It must be paid for; and when the shilling was once changed, she argued that it would look unhandsome to carry such a trifle to her parents.—Weak, silly girls! They spent the whole of it before they left the shop.

"Kate, in the mean time, continued with her parents, whose misfortunes increased every day. Mr. Active fell from a ladder and broke one of his arms, and was by this accident reduced to a starving condition. His wife was attacked by a violent fever, of which she would not inform her daughters, for fear they should take

the infection. These distresses in a few weeks, as they were both unable to work, reduced them to the most wretched state of poverty; and on the day that their two daughters were feasting, as has been related, they were almost expiring with hunger. Poor Kate, with weeping eyes, beheld them both. She had *nothing* to give them, and had exhausted her strength in nursing and attending them. Her mother lay on her wretched bed, and her melancholy father with his right arm in a sling sat beside her. "I will get them something!" said Kate to herself. Her father told her it was dinner time. "Bring what there is, my good child, for your mother." She went to their little cupboard.—Alas, it was empty! Not a crumb remained! She had wiped it clean in the morn-

ing, and those scraps had been her only breakfast. "Is there *nothing*, my child?" added he, and he looked at his wife, stroaked his left hand across his eyes, but not quick enough to prevent the tears which dropped upon the sling that supported his right. "I will fetch something," said Kate; and was hastening to the door. "Alas!" replied he, sobbing with distress, "my *last* farthing was spent yesterday." She went out, however. "I will *beg*," said she to herself, "but I will procure them something." She stood in the street a few moments, not knowing what to do. At last she ran as fast as her weakness would permit (for she was beginning to be ill with the same fever which had attacked her mother). She ran till she reached the grocer's. She inquired for her sister, but she

was not at home. She begged them to give her a bit of bread; but the men in the shop who did not know her, accused her with being a beggar and a thief; and would not believe that Nanny was her relation. They threatened to send her to the house of correction, and turned her disgracefully out of doors.

Poor Kate wept most bitterly at this treatment. She was very timid; and had not courage to reply, but wandered back again in deeper affliction than before. As she drew near home, she felt rather sick; and as she had scarcely eaten any thing for several days, she much wished for something to appease her hunger. A baker's shop was at hand, and she determined to go in and beg them to give her a roll; but she saw nobody to apply to. She called

several times, but no one answered. Loaves of bread of all sizes stood on the counter before her. "Shall I take one?" said she: "I am quite unobserved." "But is it *right?*" said she again to herself. "Shall I do a *wrong* thing only because I am not *seen?*"—She walked away. "Shall I go back," once more she added, "to my poor father and mother, and have *nothing* for them?"—She sat down upon the threshold and wept "It is better to *starve,*" at length she exclaimed, "it is better to *starve* than be *wicked!*" and she walked away. A gentlemen was riding by in a chaise, and the wind blew off his hat. She ran, picked it up, and gave it to him; and he tossed her a half-penny for her trouble. She took it up with gratitude; and as she ran back to the baker's, she repeated aloud to herself, "It is better to be

honest than to steal." The owner of the shop was now returned. She told her distressful tale, and he gave her a stale penny loaf for her money. With what joy did the poor girl return to her parents!—" Was she not happier than if she had eaten a *hundred cheesecakes?*—In the afternoon Nanny had leave to visit her mother. She blushed when she saw them, and recollected how she had spent her shilling."—

So far went the story, when William, to his great disappointment, perceived he had left the rest behind him. The cover of the little book was torn, and the leaves were fastened together with a pin, which had dropped out; and Fanny, in giving it him when they were called to tea, had, without knowing it, kept back the rest.

He communicated the accident to his grandfather; and gave him an account of what he had been reading; and concluded with hoping, that Nanny and Susan would in the end meet with the punishment which their neglect of their parents deserved; that he should rejoice to hear they were *starved* for their barbarity. "You see, my dear," returned Mr. Graves, "that the appearance of ingratitude is so odious, that it fills you with abhorrence only to read an imperfect account of it, and yet I doubt whether you who are so warm in your detestation of the crime, are not sometimes tempted to commit it." "What *I*?" said William rather warmly, "I disobey my parents, and forget them in their distress! If I had but a mouthful of bread they should have it between

them; and I am sure I always do as they desire me." "You are a good boy," replied the old gentleman; "but you have never yet been put to such a trial. Few persons *know themselves*, or are sensible *how* they should act in situations which they have not experienced. The only way you can prove your affection to your friends, is by rendering yourself worthy their regard. Only remember, that to do a *wrong thing* will give them more uneasiness than you can imagine; and that their concern for your welfare is so great, it would be the heaviest affliction they could experience to have you behave improperly; and, therefore, to merit their confidence, you must act with the same attention to their commands when they are absent as when they are present to observe you."

William was vexed at his grandfather's observation, and told him, "it seemed to imply a doubt of his conduct." Mr. Graves commended him tenderly; but said, "he had observed, that he was often severe in his judgment; and when he saw a fault in others, or read of any blameable character, he was apt to condemn it without any regard to that mercy which was a most amiable attribute, and peculiarly necessary in creatures, who were every moment in danger of falling themselves. Young persons," continued he, "are apt to look upon every crime of which they have not been guilty as *impossible* for them to commit: but that confidence in their own strength is sometimes a most dangerous snare to them in future life. I will give you an instance of this sort which

fell under my own observation. When I first went 'prentice, there was a young man about sixteen, with whom I had been always intimate, and who was bound about the same time to an uncle who lived next door to my master's. This circumstance was a great addition to our happiness, and the more I saw of him the more I had reason to esteem him. But there was one thing I wished had been otherwise in his disposition. His principles were so rigid, that I was sometimes afraid to tell him of any inadvertence I had been guilty of, though he was about my own age; for he declared such an abhorrence of every thing that was mean or deceitful, as to confess, if one of *his* friends should do a dishonourable action, he would cast him off for ever.—But the best hearts

may be tempted to evil before they are aware, if they depend so much upon themselves as to be off their guard. He had leave one evening to visit an acquaintance, and upon his arrival found that the family were engaged to go to the play. They gave him an invitation to accompany them, which for some time he declined, thinking it not quite right to do this without his uncle's knowledge. At length, however, as it was an entertainment which (as he had been but a short time in London) he had never seen, he determined to accept their offer. He felt a secret uneasiness upon his mind, as he thought his conduct not strictly right, and had great reason to suppose the proposal would by no means have met with his uncle's approbation. His regret was however for-

gotten during the representation; and he would have been quite happy had his consent been obtained. The time however, went faster than he imagined, and when he returned home it was eleven o'clock. He had unfortunately broken his watch, and his companions assuring him it was early, he sat down with them to supper. The clock at length struck twelve; and the hours had passed so agreeably, that he thought it had been but eleven. He rose immediately, and hastened home, afraid of his uncle's displeasure, and angry with himself for a conduct which his conscience disapproved.

As he was running hastily along, full of uneasiness for the reception he might meet with, his foot slipped, and down he fell against a post. He was slightly bruised, and cut his face

by the accident; but the thought immediately occurred to him to make that an excuse for his stay; and as he had mistaken a street which led him farther from home, for one which he designed to have taken; without any further reflection, he related a plausible tale to his uncle of his having lost his way; and as he had never before told an untruth, the account was believed by the old gentleman.—So far his falsity had escaped detection. He retired to-bed; but not to sleep; that comfort he could not obtain: his *conscience* represented the wickedness of which he had been guilty, and he could think of nothing but the crime which for the first time he had committed. In the morning he rose with a heavy heart; for cheerfulness is only the companion of virtue. He had too

much false pride to confess his folly; and the questions which his uncle put to him, obliged him to confirm one lie by the addition of many more.—So easily, my dear boy, do we sink from one wickedness to the commission of another; and so difficult is it to regain the right path, when once we have wandered from it.—He passed a most wretched morning, occupied with reflections upon his conduct, and entered the parlour upon a summons to dinner with a mind penetrated with remorse. But guess at his confusion, when the first object which he saw was the gentleman he had accompanied to the play, and who had called to return him his stick, which in the haste of his departure he had left behind. The explanation that followed, was such as to mortify him to the

last degree. It not only exposed his deceit to his uncle, but to the rest of the company; and his character was so much injured by the discovery, that it was many years before he could entirely reinstate himself in their good opinion: and to this day he is cautious of making a positive declaration, or profession of what he will do, for fear he should be ensnared into evil."—"It is in every one's power," said William, "to be good if they please; therefore, they are accountable certainly for their bad actions." "Very true," replied his grandfather, "but take care that you are never drawn to the commission of bad actions by the example or persuasions of others. And you should remember, that the end of all your studies, is to make you better by the force of example. When

you meet with vicious characters, let the detestation which you feel for their crimes be a warning to you to avoid a similar conduct; while on the other hand, every noble action should inspire you with emulation to imitate what you applaud. My hopes," continued the good old gentleman, "are fixed upon you *all;* but in a particular manner my cares have been engaged for *you,* as I have had a nearer concern in your education; and I trust, my William, you will recompence my solicitude, by becoming a worthy example to your brother and sister; for really I think your misconduct would break my heart."

William was generous, frank, and affectionate. He loved his grandfather most tenderly; and pressing his hand, promised his future conduct

should be all he wished.—But alas! with all his good qualities, he was in some respects of too easy a disposition. He had not resolution to oppose what he knew to be wrong when his companions proposed it; and was frequently drawn into such errors through his weak compliance, as he had long occasion to lament. *Good-nature* is a great virtue; but young people should endeavour to distinguish between what is *kind* and what is *weak*. True goodness is always obliging to others, where it can be so without acting wrongly. But no politeness can excuse an ill action; and those who propose what is blamable, ought never to be complied with. We should then with gentleness endeavour to show them the impropriety of their behaviour; and if they are too obstinate to be

convinced, leave them to their folly without partaking it with them.

William was engaged to dine that day at the house of Captain Fairform, where another boy of his own age had been invited to meet him. This gentleman's eldest son was handsome, sensible, and clever: his manner and address were uncommonly graceful and pleasing; and he behaved so well in company as to be generally admired. What a pity was it that such an insinuating appearance should not have been equalled by a better heart! He was so deceitful as to appear virtuous in the society of his parents and friends; and misled them to believe, that he was as good as he pretended. I shall pass over all the occurrences of the meeting, and what passed between this young gentleman and his

visitors, till after they had dined; when Harry Fairform proposed to them to take a walk. His father desired them not to go towards the village of Boxley, as there was a fair kept that day, and he did not choose they should mix with the company who frequented it. Harry promised obedience, and bowing, set forward with his companions the opposite way.

As soon as they were out of sight of the house, young Fairform turned about, and taking William by the arm, "Come," said he, "Tom Wilding, and you and I will go across that field, and see what is going forward yonder," pointing as he spoke to the place they had been forbidden to visit. "Why you do not mean surely to go to the *fair?*" replied Sedley with astonishment.

"Have you not promised that you would not?" "Pooh! you silly fellow," returned Harry, "Promises and pye-crust—did you never hear the old proverb?—they are both made to be broken. What will my father be the worse for it, whether I walk one way or the other? and I know which will afford me the most amusement. He is a cross old fellow to wish to confine me in such a manner without reason: I dare not tell him so, but I promise you, I take care to do as I please."

The honest heart of William was shocked at the idea of such ungenerous deceit. He blamed him for his principles, and refused to go.—"Nay, then," said his companion, "if you will stay, you must do as you please; but it was *my* promise, not your's; and if I am willing to

take the *mighty* guilt upon my own shoulders, and what is worse, run the risk of the punishment, what is that to *you ?*" "I did not *promise* to be sure," cried William, pausing; "but I know my friends would be angry were I to go without leave, and especially when the Captain has desired us so positively *not* to do it. —"The Captain's *son* must answer for that," interrupted young Wilding; "that is none of our business; but if *you* are afraid of a *drubbing,* why that is another thing." "I have no *such fear,*" returned William with indignation; "but I am too generous to abuse the confidence of my friends. They believe in my honour, and it would be base to make a wrong use of the trust they repose in me."

The two boys, with uplifted eyes,

sneered at this speech. They ridiculed his notions, and derided his attention to his parents when they were absent; and Jack Careless and Will Sportive coming up while they were in debate, they applied to them on the occasion. All now was uproar and confusion; each one trying which should laugh the most at our poor distressed Sedley. His conscience told him it was wrong to comply; but the example, the persuasions, and the ridicule of his companions prevailed, and he reluctantly set forward with them to the village. They soon arrived at the fair; and walking up to the booths, surveyed with delight the various toys with which they were furnished. Called upon on all sides to purchase something, they each began to ask the price of what most attracted their at-

tention; and William agreed to buy a trumpet for his brother: and afterwards taking up a little red morocco pocket-book, was told it would cost six shillings. He laid it back on the stall, saying, "it was too dear;" but in turning round, the flap of his coat brushed it down on the ground, and Will Sportive, unseen by any body, picked it up, and put it into his bosom. The owner soon missed his property, and charged William with the theft. This accusation he warmly resented; but the man persevered in laying the blame on him, till a mob was soon gathered round, and it was determined he should be searched.

Will Sportive, who had only taken the book for a frolick, for the same reason now contrived amidst the bustle to convey it into his companion's

pocket; and Sedley, conscious of his own innocence, grew more angry at the treatment he met with; and absolutely refused the satisfaction that was demanded. This added to the suspicions against him, and he was soon overpowered by numbers. He held his hands over his pockets, sunk down on the ground, and did all that was in his power to prevent those about him from the execution of their design:—but judge of his astonishment, when after being overcome by force, the book was found upon him.—In vain he protested his innocence. No one gave him credit, and the general cry of "*here* is a young thief!" resounded from every tongue. Some threatened him with a ducking in a horse-pond, others with a whipping at the cart's tail, and others prophesied

that he would end his days at the gallows, and come at last to be hanged.

Will Sportive, whose joke was attended with such serious consequences, began to repent his frolick; but had not the courage to own it, as he was afraid of drawing a share of the condemnation on himself. He therefore left poor William to bear the blame as well as he could, and only stood by a silent spectator of those inconveniences which he had himself been the cause of. The man still continued in a great passion, and declared he would take young Sedley before a justice of peace. Terrified at this threat, and shocked at the thought of going to a prison for a supposed offence, he begged on his knees for mercy, and offered all he had about him as a

compensation for a crime of which he knew he had not been guilty. For a guinea the owner of the book agreed to let him go; but nothing less should be the price of his liberty. Such a sum the unfortunate youth had not to give. He had spent six-pence for his trumpet, and three-pence for plum-cakes the day before; so that nine-shillings and nine-pence were all he had remaining; but this would not satisfy the person he had offended. His companions offered to lend him all they were worth, but even that was insufficient for the demand. Fairform had half-a-crown: Tom Wilding could find but three-pence three farthings, though he felt in all his pockets, and kept the expecting William in an agony of suspense. Jack Careless threw down two-pence, but said

his father would be angry if he parted with his silver. Sedley looked at him with displeasure. "Your *father* angry," said he: "if these scruples had been urged *sooner*, it would have become you better." "You shall not *have* the two-pence," returned Careless, taking it up again and putting it in his pocket: "if you do not choose it, I will not oblige you against your inclination." Will Sportive, desirous to repair the damage he had done, offered him all he was possessed of, which amounted but to thirteen-pence-halfpenny.

The distressed Sedley had nothing left, except a silver-medal which his grandfather had given him that morning, and told him to keep it for his sake. He took it from his pocket, looked at it, and bursting into tears, exclaimed, "No! not even to save

me from *prison* would I part from this."—A poor chimney-sweeper, who had come to see the merriment of the fair, and who watched the event of the uproar which this affray had occasioned, recollecting the features of William as he turned his head with the eagerness of despair, knocked his brush and shovel together, and feeling in the tatters of his waistcoat, produced a shilling. "Will this help you, master," said he: "I took it to day for sweeping Squire Nicely's chimney; but you shall have it, be the consequence what it will."——William's conscience smote him.——"I would not change my half-guinea for thee, Tony"—and the tears trickled down his blushing and repentant cheek.—The man insisted on having the medal; but William would not consent. For a

long time he refused, till at length it growing late, he was terrified with apprehension, and his companions declared they would stay no longer. So overcome by their importunity, he yielded it up, thanked Tony for his kindness, which he promised to repay the next day, and with a melancholy countenance accepted his discharge, and went back to Captain Fairform's.

As they did not choose to return directly from the village, they were obliged to go a farther way about; so that it was near the dusk of the evening when they reached home. Harry told a plausible tale to excuse their stay, and said, "they had met with their two play-fellows, and been walking with them." Young Sedley sat in silent vexation without uttering a syllable, and soon after took

his leave, and returned to his father's.

As he drew nigh the gate, he began weeping afresh; and instead of the pleasure and alacrity with which he usually entered; and the joy which he always felt at meeting with his friends, he crept softly along, oppressed with the consciousness of having acted *wrong*; and finding the coach gates open, sneaked unobserved into the house. He stood for some time in the hall, wanting the courage to meet his assembled friends; till hearing his grandfather's voice, he listened to know what he was saying. Mr. Graves was speaking to little Bob. "Yes," said he, "I have given your brother and sister a medal exactly like that; and now I shall see *(for my sake)* which of you will keep it the longest."

To express what the poor fellow felt at that moment is almost impossible. He ran up into his own apartment, and throwing himself with his face upon the bed, sobbed out, "What shall I do? What can I say?" At length after weeping some time, he determined, as he really felt a violent head-ache, to plead that as an excuse, and to go to-bed immediately. With this resolution he composed his countenance as well as he could, and slowly walked into the parlour. His brother, with that fondness which he always expressed, directly brought the present Mr. Graves had given him, and jumping as he spoke, pressed William's arm, and looking up in his face, "Is it not a *nice* medal?" said he. "Let me look at your's, to see if they are *exactly* alike."—The poor boy was covered

with blushes; and as Robert repeated his question, he peevishly replied, "I have not got it about me." He then mentioned the pain in his head, and wished his friends good night. The kind concern which they expressed for his indisposition, added greatly to his uneasiness. "How little," said he, "do I deserve their tenderness! and how unworthy do I feel of their solicitude! If they knew in what manner I have behaved out of their sight, they would think me deserving of punishment and contempt. How will *they* be able to rely upon me, when I cannot depend upon *myself?* I *knew* it was wrong to go with Fairform, yet I went:—and now all these troubles are the consequence of one bad action. I think I will never more be persuaded to do what is

not strictly right."—Such was his firm resolution at that instant; but though his heart was noble, generous, and open to conviction, it was *weak* in the moment of temptation. He wanted *resolution* to complete his character; for with many virtues, and an excellent disposition, he was easily persuaded to act contrary to his judgment. Hence he was frequently seduced by his companions into such errors as gave him lasting cause for repentance. In the present instance his regret for his fault was sincere. He wept till he fell asleep; and his first thoughts in the morning were an earnest wish that he had returned to school. "All the pleasure I have felt on this addition to my holidays, does not pay me for my present pain; since nothing," said

he, "is so terrible as a guilty conscience!"

Who now would have imagined, that under the sense of this conviction and suffering, from *one* deviation, he would directly have sunk into another of a worse kind?—With a melancholy countenance he left his room, and was going through the hall into the garden, when Harry Fairform entered at the opposite door, and joining him, they walked out together.

"Why you look still more pitiable," said his visitor, "than when we parted last night: surely your old square-toes did not give you a drubbing! I came on purpose to know how you came off after the loss of your money?" "A drubbing!" returned William with indignation:

"no indeed! neither my father nor grandfather ever beat me in their lives: I am not afraid of *that,* I assure you. At present they do not know how much I am to blame; but I would give any thing in the world that I had not gone with you to the fair." "Why then, Sedley," replied his companion, "you are a greater fool than I thought you. My father is pretty free with his horsewhip; and when he finds out that I have disobeyed him, he makes me feel what he calls *military discipline,* till I can neither sit, stand, or go; but had I nothing more to fear than one of old Graves's mumbling preachments, it would be a great while before I should look thus dismal." "For shame!" exclaimed Sedley, who loved his grandfather to the highest degree, "for shame!

do not uttter such sentiments: if you can only be governed by a *horse-whip,* you *deserve* to feel its strokes: but I would have you know, that I scorn to be kept within bounds merely by the fear of punishment. I wish my friends to *depend* upon me in their *absence,* as well as if they could *see* all my actions; and it is from the consciousness of having abused their confidence, that my looks show that sorrow which you so much ridicule. The loss of that *medal* too," added he, bursting into tears, "which my grandfather gave me to keep for his sake, what must he think of my *affection,* when he knows on what occasion I parted with it?"

Fairform in vain used every argument to afford him consolation; his distress increased as the hour of

breakfast approached; and neither ridicule or advice had the power to render him composed. When just as they were returning to the house, Harry stopped, and in the middle of the gravel-walk picked up little Bob's medal, which he had a few minutes before dropped from his coat-pocket, in taking out his handkerchief. "Here." said he, his eyes sparkling with pleasure; "now I hope you will dry your tears: take this, and have no further dread of detection,"—William stretched forth his hand in a transport of delight; but immediately recollecting himself, "It is not mine," said he: "O *that it were!* I dare say my brother has lost it." "And will you not take it then!" exclaimed the astonished Fairform: "What a ridiculous scruple is this! If Bob *has* lost it, it

is but a piece of *negligence ;* and no creature need be acquainted that you have found it; as they are exactly alike you cannot be discovered: and only think how angry they will be, if they know all the circumstances of our last night's frolick." ——Poor Sedley paused—every reproach which he deserved, and the reproof which he dreaded, rose in sad prospect to his mind. Harry's persuasions seconded his inclination, and increased his fears. The moment was critical to his virtue. Honour forbad him to do such a base action, while his apprehension of his friends displeasure inclined him to run the hazard of *future* remorse to escape from *present* shame. The struggle of his mind was great, and it ended nobly for a moment.—" No !" said he

with firmness, "I have suffered enough already from doing wrong, I will not be so ungenerous as to injure my brother, and deceive my friends: I will trust to my grandfather's indulgence: I will honestly confess the whole truth, and let my sorrow expiate my fault." "For pity's sake," returned Fairform, "do not be so rash: if you have no regard for yourself have some consideration for me. You agreed to be of our party, and now you will involve me in distress. If you tell the whole to Mr. Graves, he will say, that I seduced you to do what you would not otherwise have been guilty of, and will prevent our meeting in future. I know his rigid notions of obedience: he will tell my father, and his punishments are so severe, that my heart sickens at the thought—

Cruel, unkind Sedley! I came on purpose to give *you* comfort, and you will heap these evils upon me in return. I may have acted wrong last night; but I am sure I would not be thus unfriendly to you."

This argument was directly suited to the generosity of William's disposition. He could not bear to give pain to another. To make his companion suffer through *his* means, seemed to him so mean and cowardly, that all the more powerful reasons of truth and virtue were considered as inferior to this one consideration; while from motives of the highest good-nature, by viewing the affair in a false light, he at length yielded to Fairform's persuasions; and what no temptation on his *own* account could effect, the solicitude for Harry's safety induced him to comply with.—

A striking lesson to young persons, of the danger which must arise from bad company; and an alarming caution to all: since without *prudence* and *resolution* a good disposition may be led into the commission of evil, even when they intend to do right.—For a long time they debated on the subject; till at length overcome by his companion's entreaties, he put the medal in his pocket, and added, "I shall keep this as a monument of my *folly*, in first yielding against my conscience to go with you to the fair: *that* has been the foundation of every inconvenience, and now I see not *where* the evil will *stop*. Let this warn *you*, Harry, for the future, that however you may escape detection, every disobedience will bring its own punishment."—

A repeated call to breakfast now

obliged them to go in. Young Fairform paid his compliments with that grace which distinguished him upon all occasions, and without embarrassment sat down by Mr. Sedley. William placed himself in the window-seat, and could scarcely answer the inquiries which were put to him about his health. He had lost the confidence of an innocent mind; and his behaviour was confused, bashful, and silent. Harry soon took his leave, and Mr. Graves invited his grandson to take a walk. Master Sedley would at that time have willingly been excused; but having no reason which he could urge against it, he prepared to go: when just as they were ready to set off, little Bob came out of the garden in great distress, saying, "he did not know *how*, or *where*; but he

had lost his medal!"—William coloured like crimson!—He made him no answer, but turning round, stooped down at the same time, as if looking for something. "O! there is a good boy, do look for it," said Bob: "you are very kind, but I do not think I lost it here: I know I had it this morning." "You have not kept it long for my sake," said his grandfather: "I dare say William and Nancy can both show theirs." Miss Sedley pulled her's from her pocket. Her brother was going to do the same, but his conscience would not let him draw forth his hand. He held the medal between his finger and thumb, but did not dare to bring it out to view. "Do not cry, Bob," said Mr. Graves, "you are a little boy, and are not used to be entrusted with money:

I will get you another, and your brother shall take care of it. He loves me so well, that I dare say he will be able to produce his, when I am dead and gone." William could not answer but the tears trickled down his cheeks. His grandfather embracing him, told him not to be concerned. "I am an old man, my dear boy, and cannot expect to live many years longer; but do not grieve for that circumstance: when you look at the medal which I gave you, though but a trifle in itself, let it remind you how much I loved you, and how earnestly I wished to promote your happiness. Remember, my child, that you can never be comfortable, unless you have a clear conscience; and let every testimony of your friends affection to you, be a remembrance to act with honour, generosity, and integrity."

Sedley made no reply, but by his sobs. The caresses of Mr. Graves wounded him more than the keenest reproaches. He would have confessed all, but the fear of drawing Fairform into disgrace kept him silent; and he set forward on his walk with an uneasiness too great to be described. In vain did his venerable companion endeavour to engage him in conversation: he was too conscious of deserving blame to join with his usual freedom and gaiety. At length, as they ascended to a rising ground which opened to a very extensive prospect, Mr. Graves, pointing to the village where William had lately been in search of his chimney-sweeper acquaintance, required, "When he had seen him? and whether he had yet fulfilled his intention of giving him

any money?"—This question was too important to admit of immediate answer: if he told *when,* he might be asked *where* he had met him? and that would amount to a confession of all he had taken such pains to conceal. He hesitated for some time, till his grandfather observing his confusion, took his hand, and with tender seriousness thus addressed him.—"I have seen with uneasiness, my dear boy, that some secret burthens your mind, nor do I wish for your confidence, unless you can *willingly* repose it in my affection. Perhaps I may be able to advise you—speak your difficulties, and let not mistrust or anxiety overspread your features." "I do not deserve," said the repentant Sedley, "that you should treat me thus kindly; nor am I at liberty to tell

you the subject which distresses my heart. Another is concerned, or greatly as I have been to blame, I would this moment confess it all." "You best know, my love," returned Mr. Graves, "whether you have made any promise which honour would oblige you to keep sacred; but remember, that you may be drawn into guilt, by a too steady adherence to a bad cause; and be assured, that person cannot be your real friend, who would engage you to conceal from your parents, what you think they ought to be acquainted with."—A pause now ensued, and William, after debating some time, was going to confess the whole: when a man with a little girl came in sight; whom upon a nearer view, they discovered to be Fanny Mopwell. They immediately

renewed their acquaintance; and she informed them that she had come the morning before on a visit to her uncle, who kept a little shop in the village of Boxley, and had invited her to be present at the fair. William, with his grandfather's leave, asked her to pass the day with him; and as Mr. Sedley's family was well known in that part of the country, her uncle who was with her, consented to her going.

Our young gentleman was much rejoiced at having a companion whose presence might interrupt any farther conversation; though to take such a walk with his grandfather was at any other season what he most wished for. At their return he presented Fanny to his mother and sister, who both received her with great pleasure. As for little Bob he

sat weeping in the window, sucking the corner of his pocket-handkerchief, and now and then gently touching a fly on the glass of the window, to see it walk from place to place.———Again, William felt the stings of remorse. He went out into the garden, and taking the pocket-piece once more in his hand, determined to restore it to its right owner. "My brother shall not be thus distressed for my crimes: I will not be so base, let the event be what it may." With this resolution he again rejoined the company; and going up to master Robert, said with a smile, "Will this cheer your spirits? I have found your treasure." Bob eagerly jumped down to take it, and throwing his arms round his brother's neck, held him almost double to receive his caresses.

"Where did you find it?" said he. Thank you! thank you a thousand times!"

William's delight was damped with the recollection of how little he deserved his acknowledgments.—A bad action interrupts the enjoyment of every satisfaction, and transforms all our pleasure into pain.—He was then obliged to give an account of the place where he had discovered it; but carefully concealed how long it had been in his possession; leaving every one to imagine he had but just picked it up. His feelings, however, on the occasion were so uncomfortable, that he retired to his own apartment to think of the occasion in solitude. Bob, in the mean time, skipping and jumping about with the light-hearted pleasure of innocence, carried his dear medal

to Fanny Mopwell, desiring her to observe its beauties, and declaring he would always carefully guard it for the future. The girl looked at it some time, and then said, "she had one just like it, which a man of her uncle's acquaintance had given her that morning;" and taking it out of a little iron box which she had bought at the fair, said, "it was too large to go in a red striped one in which she kept all the rest of her money."

Mr. Graves begged he might see it, as those he had given his grandchildren were of great age, though they had been so well preserved, and he thought were extremely scarce. So laying it down on the table while he put on his spectacles, he afterwards took it to the window, and examined it very minutely; and turning round, begged Fanny would

tell him if she knew how the man had gotten it. Fanny replied, " she had heard him say, he received it the night before from a saucy boy who was going to steal a book from his stall; but that she knew nothing more about it." The old gentleman thanked her, and went out of the room. He walked up stairs, and going into his grandson's chamber, found him writing at his bureau.— " I do not wish to interrupt you, my dear," said he, " but pray lend me your medal for a moment, as I want to compare it with one I have in my hand."——Sedley's cheeks were the colour of crimson: he was too honest to tell a falsehood; but his confusion left him not a word to say.—" I-I-I," stammered he out, " I-I-I have not,"—and burst into tears. " William!" said his grand-

father gravely, "Tell me the truth."—He could make no answer for some time but by his sobs, till the question being again repeated, he took Mr. Graves by the hand, and in an agony of grief proceeded as follows:

"Indeed, Sir, I will not *deceive* you. I have been very much to blame; and one crime has involved me in many others; but if you can now forgive me, I think I shall never do so again. When I went to Captain Fairform's yesterday, Harry wanted me to go with him and Tom Wilding to the fair. His father had desired him not, and I thought it wrong to go; but they laughed at me so much for my squeamishness, and would have it I was afraid only of *punishment*, knowing *that* not to be my motive; against my *conscience* I consented.

When we got there I took hold of a *plaguy* pocket-book intending only to ask the price; and finding it to cost six shillings, I laid it down again, as I could not afford it. The man soon after said I had *stolen* it. I knew I was innocent, and denied the charge. He wanted to feel in my pockets; which I thought very insolent, and would not let him. However, among them, they would do so, and my resistance was in vain:—and to be sure *there it was!* —and Brestlaw must have conjured it there, for I cannot imagine how else it was done. So then, Sir, there was such a mob about me you cannot think; and I was abused and called a thief, and I do not know what; and he declared he would send me to the justice, unless I would give him a guinea: and

amongst us *all* we could not muster one, and so at last I was forced to let him have my medal; but indeed, Sir, I did not till the *very last;* and I have been miserable ever since." "The *guilty,* William, will ever be so," returned Mr. Graves very seriously; "and I am sincerely sorry to rank you in that number; but tell me when you felt for it in the morning, was it in your pocket? You know it could not be, why then did you suffer me to think the contrary, and to commend you while I partly blamed your brother?" "You have taught me, Sir," replied he, "that an honest confession is the best reparation for a fault. I wish I had done it sooner, but Harry Fairform persuaded me to keep it *secret* for his sake. I do not wish to lay the blame upon *him* to make *myself*

appear less guilty; but his bad advice made me take my brother's medal, which he found in the garden, and I have kept it till just now, when I could not be easy longer to detain it. And now, Sir, you know the whole;—if you can trust my promise for the future, I will never again behave so unworthy of your affection; and if you knew what I have suffered for my present fault, it might incline you to pity and forgive me."—Here he ceased, held down his head, nor had courage to look up.—

Mr. Graves, with great kindness, took him by the hand, "Your *honesty*," said he, "pleads much in your favour, and as you feel a conviction of your fault, I hope I may rely upon you for the future. The end of reprehension and punishment,

is but to *amend* the offender: and if your heart is truly *generous*, an immediate *forgiveness* of your error, will bind you most strongly to future watchfulness. Let this instance, however, teach you that *candour* of disposition which you ought to exercise for *others*; and remember that although, as you justly observed, "every one may be good if they *please*," yet that circumstances do sometimes arise, where the best hearts may be *seduced* or surprised into guilt: and therefore, though you should guard your own conduct with peculiar care, yet you ought never to forget every charitable allowance for the faults of *others*. It is rashness, presumption, and folly, to condemn those actions of which we know not the cause, the temptation, or the motive. But as to the

character of Harry Fairform, you may fairly conclude it to be improper for your imitation. Vice cannot be divested of guilt; and he must be extremely wicked who can laugh at a parent's prohibition, and wilfully persuade another to do wrong. His advice this morning was founded in *meanness, selfishness,* and *deceit*; and thus, my dear boy, have you been led on step by step from the commission of one bad action to another; till you have lost the calm peace which *innocence* only can bestow, and feel your mind a prey to the uneasy sensations of *guilt.* Be assured, my child, that if you pursue that course, it is still more thorny. Had you added to your crimes a *lie,* I should have detected you immediately, as the man to whom you gave the medal, presented it to Fanny

Mopwell, and I have it now in my hand. This *W. S.* I scratched on it myself in this particular place, that I might know in case either of them were lost, to which it belonged; and the initials of your brother and sister you will find in theirs. Consider then the improvement that you may reap from this transaction.—However in secret any ill action may seem to be committed; yet some unthought of and unexpected circumstance may discover it. Little did you think this morning of seeing the child who is below; and still less was you apprehensive when you invited her home, that she would be the person to bring your medal to me. Let this convince you, then, that if you do wrong, you are ever liable to *detection* by the most unlikely means, and in consequence are

open to *disgrace*. *Security*, my dear child, is the certain attendant on *Virtue*: an *honest* heart has no mean secret to *conceal*; and therefore, is at all times free from those uneasy cares, with which you have this morning been so much distressed: it needs no evasion, and is above the use of any. Cherish, therefore, this openness of character which is so truly amiable, by avoiding every thing which your *conscience* tells you is improper. That inward monitor is in such cases your best director. If you feel *uneasy*, and are conscious you are acting as your friends would condemn, be not afraid of *ridicule*. You may suffer from its shafts for a few moments, and may find it disagreeable to be laughed at by those who are more foolish and more wicked than your-

self; but in a little time this will be over, and afterwards you will enjoy the approbation of your friends, and your own heart: and this, my boy, is a noble recompence. As for doing wrong from the principle of not fearing *punishment*, it is the weakest argument that can be urged. A boy who is not afraid to *deserve* chastisement, must have lost every principle of honour: and though your friends have always treated you with generosity, it is because you have hitherto been *obedient* and *good* in return. Nor would it be to their credit to let you escape with impunity, if you should pursue a different conduct. Never, therefore, boast that you are not *afraid* of the rod, but that you are determined never to incur the smart: that you will never be persuaded to a *mean*

action, and *therefore* it is an object which can cause you no terror. I know your heart is generous, but you are easily persuaded. You must fortify yourself in this particular, or you will be in great danger of error in your future life. *Steadiness* of *principle,* my dear *child,* is absolutely necessary to form a great and good man. You love your brother, —but to oblige a worthless boy, you consented to *injure,* to *deceive* and to *distress* him. Did not his unsuspecting innocence wound you, when he begged you would *look* for his medal, and thanked you for your trouble?—Thus it is, that wickedness of any kind, hardens the heart. However, I flatter myself, you will take warning from this instance of your misconduct, and be taught that it is impossible to fix bounds to a *bad*

action, or to say, I will go on so far in error, and then I will stop: when once you consent to the smallest deviation from innocence, it is not possible to determine how deeply you may be involved in guilt, or to what lengths of mischief or wickedness your first fault may conduce."

William, with the greatest contrition, promised to be more cautious for the future; and his grandfather, after sealing his forgiveness with repeated embraces, left him to recover his former composure.—His mind now in some measure relieved from the heavy burthen with which he had been oppressed, soon regained a sufficient degree of calmness to rejoin his friends; though still the consciousness of the late transactions abated his vivacity, and made him bashful and silent. His thoughts

during the morning had been wholly engaged with his own concerns; but when dinner was over, he recollected that he had promised to return the shilling to Tony, which he had so generously lent him in his distress. Unwilling to renew the subject with any of his relations, he was again distressed for money; but resolving to keep his promise, he applied to his sister for two shillings, which she immediately gave him, and he set off full speed on his way to the village, to find his sooty friend. For some time before he arrived at the place, he heard the screams of an object seemingly in violent pain. As he approached, they sounded fainter and more exhausted; and when he reached the spot, they ceased entirely.—But judge of his disappointment, terror, and compas-

sion, when he beheld the unfortunate Tony Climbwell, unbound from a tree by his inhuman master, who had been beating him with a leather strap, and had afterwards given him a blow on the head with his brush, which had stunned and deprived him of sense, in consequence of which he fell to the ground, and was left there with a kick from the same brutal wretch, and threatened,—"that if he did not soon get up, he would come and rouse him with a vengeance."

William went to him with an intention to raise him; but found he could not stand, nor return him any answer to his inquiries. At a little distance, however, he discovered the boy who had been Tony's companion at their first meeting; and after calling him some time in vain, went

up to him, and begged to know for what crime his fellow apprentice had been so cruelly used. "I am afraid of going to help him," said Jack,—"but Master has beat him because he did not bring home the shilling which he had yesterday for sweeping 'Squire Nicely's chimney. He told Master as *how* he could bring it him to-day; and master did wait till the afternoon; but now he *was* in such a passion, that he said, "he would kill him;" and I was afraid as *how* he would, and I believe he has, I do not see him stir; and sure he would get up if he could, for fear of a second drubbing." "And has my crime been the occasion of *this* evil too?" said William: "Well might my grandfather say I did not know where the mischief of an error may stop. My poor Tony! what

shall I do to recover thee? and how shall I recompence thy sufferings? sufferings too which *I* have occasioned!"—With this lamentation he returned to the unfortunate object of his pity, who after a heavy groan opened his eyes.—"Tony!" cried Sedley, endeavouring to raise him, "my dear boy, how do you do?"—The voice of compassion sounded so strange to him, that he looked amazed at his friend; who repeating his question, begged him to get up, and if he could, to walk forward with him a little way.

A chimney-sweeper is accustomed to ill usage; and Tony had not fallen into the hands of a master who would spare him his full share of suffering.—He arose, however, with William's assistance, and crept on till they came to a field-gate, over

which he scrambled with difficulty, and then sat down under a hedge, which concealed him from observation.—Sedley with tears entreated him to forgive him for not having sooner discharged his debt, and for being the occasion of bringing him into so much trouble; "but why," said he, "did you not come to me, and you might have been sure I would have paid you immediately?" "Ah! master," replied Tony, "I thought you would; and so this morning I went to his honour's at the great house, where I first saw you, and the gay coach, and the long tail nags; and so I *axed* for young master, for I did not know your name; and the coachman I fancy it was, said, "I was a pretty fellow to *axe* for young master truly; but that, however young master, was not at

home." I then said you owed me a shilling, and begged him to pay it for you, and I dared to say you would return it. Upon this he bid me go about my business for an impudent knave; and giving me two or three hearty smacks with a long horse-whip he had in his hand, sent me out of the court-yard." "How very unfortunate!" cried Sedley; "this must have happened while I was out with my grandfather; but I will now pay you immediately," added he, giving him the two shillings he had brought. "I have no more at present; but the first money I get, you shall share it I promise you." "I lent you but *one*," said Tony, "so you have given me this too much." "Keep it, keep it," replied William, "I only wish that I had more to give."—

†

At this instant little Jack (whose fear of his master had kept him from visiting his companion, but who had watched him into the field) came running to Tony with information that he might go home, for that his tormentor was gone to the ale-house. —The boy immediately got up, and said, "he would make the best of his way, and take the opportunity of going back; for that his mistress was the kindest creature in the world, and would be glad to see him again."—William was determined to accompany him; and they soon reached the cottage together.—The poor woman was holding one hand over her eye, the other sustained a little infant whom she was suckling, and who looked up at her every now and then with a smile, while her tears dropped on its innocent face.

A girl about two years old was standing by her knee, and crying for some victuals, and to be taken up, mammy. Another child at a broken table, was trying to reach a bit of stale crust covered with soot, that his father had tossed out of his pocket.—Such was the scene young Sedley beheld at his entrance; and which presented a striking contrast to the elegance he had been always accustomed to.—"What is the matter, mistress?" cried Tony, in an accent of compassion and concern.—At the sound of his voice, she looked up, and showed her eye, which was swelled in such a manner she could scarcely see.—"Oh! my poor boy, how are you?" she replied, "I thought you had been killed, and by interceding in your behalf, provoked your master so much, that he gave

me a blow so severe I really thought it would have ended all my troubles together.—But who is that young gentleman ?" added she.——Tony briefly related the account of their late meeting, as he had before informed her of the occasion of their acquaintance, and that he had lent William the shilling, which had caused them so much trouble.

The children now became more clamorous for food; but she told them she had nothing to give them.

Tony, however, showed the money he had received; and promised if they were good, they should have a quartern loaf. He then dispatched Jack to fetch one, whose speedy return afforded all parties great satisfaction. The eagerness with which they devoured the stale bread occasioned Sedley the highest astonish-

ment. They each thanked him for his kindness, when told they owed it to him; and he experienced more pleasure in having contributed to their comfort, than any amusement had hitherto afforded him: yet his delight was much damped by the recollection of the pain he had occasioned; and the bruise on poor Mrs. Blackall's eye was an addition to all the other mischief which had attended his fault. He thought it time, however, to take his leave, and wishing them a good-night and a speedy recovery, set out on his return home.—Fanny was gone when he arrived; and he was not a little disappointed that he had lost the opportunity of enjoying her company, and still more, that he had forgotten to ask for the rest of the book, which contained the account of Mr. Active

and his family; or to return the part which she had lent him. The next morning he sent the servant to deliver it to her at her uncle's, as he had promised to return it before he went back to school.

Mr. Graves having been rather indisposed the preceding evening, did not breakfast with the family; and his grandson very soon retired to his apartment in order to amuse him with his conversation.—"You are very kind, my dear boy," said he, "to favour me with your company; but as your holidays are nearly over, I do not wish to confine you to an old man's room, as I am sensible that more lively entertainments are better relished at your time of life."—William assured him that his attendance was voluntary; and then informed him of his visit to

the poor chimney-sweeper, and all the circumstances which had attended it.—" Unhappy Tony!" replied Mr. Graves, " his fate is a severe one! and yet, my child, it is but a few days ago, since you wished to be in his situation. Do you not now feel the folly of seeking to change your state in life at a venture, only because you are dissatisfied with some trifling circumstance which disturbs you at the present moment? I would not wish you to be insensible to the grief of parting with your friends. That heart which is destitute of affection and gratitude, is unworthy to be ranked with human beings. But do you consider, that an opportunity of pursuing your studies is a blessing which you ought to value as inestimable; and instead of repining at your fate, you

should be thankful that your parents have it in their power to give you this high advantage. Never, therefore, for the future, allow yourself to judge by outward appearance; nor let any agreeable prospect either in the affluent or the indigent, incite you to wish yourself in the condition of another; since you may be assured, *that* state in which you are placed is the best suited to *you*. Higher wisdom than our's directs every event; and it is well we are not left to determine our own situation."—"I," said Master Sedley, "as I am now convinced, have indeed *reason* to be satisfied; but sure Tony, exposed to the world without a friend, left to the savage cruelty of an inhuman master, obliged to *labour* for his *bread*, and to *starve* when he has earned it,—surely, Sir, *he* may wish

to change, and not be blamable for being discontented." "No one, my dear," returned Mr. Graves, "can stand excused for murmuring against Providence when we know that the world is not left to the confusion of chance. We have reason to be easy under the most afflictive circumstances. Tony wished to be in your place on Monday; and had he been metamorphosed in person and situation, with the remembrance of his former state in his mind, he would probably for some time have been much happier. But supposing him to have had *your* ideas, he would have been, as you then styled yourself, 'the most miserable creature in the world;' and even wished for that very state which now excites all your compassion. The miseries of poverty are great: they

call for your pity: they have a right to expect your relief. But this world is not the *only* hope of the *good*. Riches are not to be considered as your *own* property. They are *lent* you to be well bestowed. Every one is accountable for his portion, be it great or small. You have now only a few shillings, or it may be a guinea at your disposal. As you use the little you have at present, in all probability in the same manner you will bestow the possessions you will have in future. Accustom yourself, therefore, to consider you should lay by a part of your small stock to relieve the poor *now*, and you will find increasing pleasure in the power of being more liberal hereafter. Our *vices*, William, in every state will be productive of misery. No situation is ne-

cessarily unhappy. If the *rich* are *wicked,* they can have no enjoyment; and the same cause will add double distress to *poverty.* Tony's master is drunken, passionate, and prodigal. He wastes his small gains at the ale-house, beats his apprentice without reason, abuses his wife, and injures his children. This causes misery to himself and to his whole family. But these evils are not to be reckoned as attendant upon poverty: they would equally destroy the felicity of the man of fortune. A bad temper spoils the relish of every enjoyment: a good one sweetens the toils of labour; nay, can mitigate sorrow, sickness, and want.—I called the day before yesterday on a poor family who live in a cottage adjoining to Tony's master. Mr. Scrapewell, just risen

from a neat but shabby bed, was placed in an old wicker chair on one side the door, to feel the refreshment of the air; while his eldest daughter, a girl of about fifteen years of age, appeared busy in putting the room in order; and when I entered was sweeping the sand on the floor with a little heath broom. Another girl was picking some parsley, which she put into a basin of water, or pipkin I believe they call it, for it had yellow stripes and black spots upon it, and I should not have noticed it, if I had not afterwards thrown it down by accident and broke it. Three or four other children were playing about; and the youngest, near six months old, was asleep in a cradle, which he rocked every now and then with his foot. They placed a seat for me, and I inquired

how large a family he had? "O! Sir," replied he, "we have nine; and that is my eldest. We struggle hard; for it is a great many to maintain. My first four put us almost out of heart, as my wife had them very fast, and used to grieve, and fret, and vex herself to think where we should get bread; but I told her God would fit the back to the burthen, or the burthen to the back; and I tried to comfort her all I could, and used to say, Why *lookee* now, Beckey! when we were *alone* we did but live, and when we had *one* child we could do no more; so I trust if we have a dozen we shall do as much. But yet, Sir, I own my own heart failed me, when I thought how *fast* money *went out*, and how *slow* it *came in*, though I worked, and worked my fingers to

the bone, yet I prayed God to bless us, and hitherto, though we have been driven to many a hard pinch, thanks to his mercy, we have kept out of the workhouse; and often when I have been at my last farthing, and we have lived within an inch of starving, he has raised us up some unexpected friend, and we have jogged on again much as usual. So this has taught me *never* to despair; and I am determined to put the best foot forward, and hope we shall do again yet, though I have been laid up with an ague and fever these six weeks."—As he finished this account his wife returned from the field with her gown on her arm, her green stays left open on account of the heat, and her cap tied up over her head. She looked hot indeed; and dropping me a courtesy as

she entered, affectionately inquired after her husband: then taking up the infant, kissed it, suckled it, and gave it to one of the girls to nurse, while she went back again to her labour, after eating a few mouthfuls of bread and cheese. Love, harmony, neatness, good-humour, civility, and kindness, dwell in their little cot, and yet, William, their riches are not greater than the chimney-sweeper's. Virtue and economy only make the difference. While the one squanders his small gain at the ale-house, the other is laying up every farthing as a provision for his children; and his good conduct ensures him assistance and protection from all who know him. Add to this one consideration which is more than all the rest, that the blessing of Heaven will attend the good,

and keep that mind in peace which is staid on its support."

As Mr. Graves concluded this sentence, Mr. Sedley softly opened the door. "I thought you had been asleep, Sir," said he, "or I should have been with you sooner. I am afraid this young man has disturbed you." "O! not at all," returned the old gentleman, "his company is always a cordial to me. I forget the infirmities of age when I see my children and grandchildren round me; and I am sorry we must so soon part from William as you mentioned this morning." "He must go to school this week," said his father. "We shall all grieve to lose him; but his learning cannot be neglected. He will not wish, I hope, to waste this most important part of his life without its due im-

provement; and now is the time to lay the foundation for every future excellence." "But is not the culture of the *heart* then," replied the melancholy Sedley, "is not that the most essential point? and I am sure if I improve in the knowledge of the classics, I do not in the science of Virtue: and pray of what use is it to learn the Metamorphoses of Ovid? that Arachne was converted into a spider, Narcissus transformed to a flower,—that Pyramus and Thisbe were turned into mulberry trees,—and the rest of the fabulous stories of the poets? What is it to me that Æneas went to Carthage,—that Dido stabbed herself when he departed thence; or that he afterward, conquered in the engagement with Turnus; and the rest of the history with which we are plagued in Vir-

gil? And as to the care of my *morals*, I am under much greater temptations, from the bad examples of my schoolfellows, and from wanting the kind advice of my friends, than I could be at home. And as I am not designed either for a clergyman or counsellor, I do not see any great necessity for my learning so *very* much." "I am sorry to see you thus averse to study," said his father, "as it is of the utmost consequence to your appearance in life. Do you consider, that without a cultivated understanding, a thorough knowledge of history, and an acquaintance with Homer, Virgil, Terence, Ovid, and those authors whom you seem so much to despise; you can never make an agreeable companion to men of sense. By the perusal of history you will learn to

distinguish truth from fable, and to know what part is founded on fact, and what on the imagination of the poet. These authors will store your mind with images the most sublime and beautiful, assist your judgment and form your taste: since their works have been esteemed the model for composition in all succeeding times. Without a constant attention, therefore, to improve in reading and understanding them, you will be ignorant of those subjects which every author refers to; which are frequently the foundation of conversation, and which afford hints to the sculptor and the painter for their finest pieces. You will stare with stupid wonder at every object of this kind that you meet with, unknowing to what they refer, or what they mean to represent. Besides, as the

Heathen Mythology, or account of their Gods, is connected with this study, it is absolutely necessary you should be acquainted with it. Many things that now appear absurd in the account of their worship, had in their original a deeper moral: this though idle boys may not understand or search for, it would much improve you to be taught. When you read that Minerva the Goddess of wisdom was produced out of Jupiter's brain; the poets intended to represent by it, that the wit and ingenuity of man did not invent the useful sciences, which were for universal advantage derived from the brain of Jupiter; that is, from the inexhaustible fountain of the *Divine Wisdom,* from whence not only the arts and sciences, but the blessings of knowledge and virtue also pro-

ceed. The helm, the shield, and all the different symbols which belong to her character have each their particular meaning: to instance to you only in one of them. The owl, a bird supposed to see in the dark, was sacred to Minerva, and painted upon her images, as the representation of a wise man, who scattering and dispelling the clouds of ignorance and error, is clear-sighted when others are stark blind. So you, who take all the fictions of the poets for nonsense and folly, would, if you had learning to comprehend their meaning, not only be entertained with their beauties, but improved by the moral they contain. The more you know, and the greater proficiency you make in study, the higher pleasure will it afford you; but while you consider your lessons

as *tasks* which you are to get by heart, and what will be of no use to you in future, you defeat the purpose of your education, are unhappy now, and will be despised and contemned hereafter. A *gentleman* should be still more superior by his *merit* than his *fortune*: his knowledge should be more general and diffusive than is required for any profession whatever. He ought to be acquainted with the great authors of ancient and modern times, understand the constitution and laws of his own country; and by the contemplation of every noble character, learn to form his own to perfection. Do not, therefore, entertain so mean an opinion of yourself, or your future consequence, as to rely on your *estate* alone for respect. Let religion be your guide and chief study;

but let history, poetry, with every branch of polite and useful learning, be considered as *essential* to your education."—

Here ceased Mr. Sedley, and his son looked down in timid silence, fearful he had offended his friends by the indifference he had expressed for his exercise. Mr. Graves, however, encouraged him, by kindly adding, " When you have mastered the first steps, you will mount upward with alacrity. The beginning of every attempt is difficult; but be of good courage; persevere, and you will find it afterwards pleasant, easy and agreeable."

During the foregoing conversation Jeffery Squander had called to invite William to dine with him, and afterwards to return to school in his father's coach; and Mrs. Sedley now

introduced the young gentleman up stairs. The offer was so convenient (as it was before intended he should go back the next morning) that it was accepted with satisfaction by all but the person whom it most concerned. Yet poor Sedley was ashamed to express his reluctance while in company with his schoolfellow; and made no opposition to the proposal. The tears, however, which he endeavoured to suppress, would officiously start into his eyes. —His father patted him on the back, and said, "it would make but a few hours difference."—His grandfather stroaked his cheek as he turned round towards the window to hide his emotion. This affected him still more, and his mother letting fall her scissars, he picked them up; but as she was stooping for them at

the same time, he saw that her eyes showed equal concern; which, unwilling to have observed, she had not immediately wiped away, and he received a tear upon his hand.—It was necessary he should immediately retire to prepare for his departure. He was spared the pain of taking leave of his brother and sister, they happening to be from home; a circumstance which he much regretted, as they would not return till the evening.

When he had given a little indulgence to his grief in private, he returned to his friends, and endeavoured to assume a more cheerful countenance than suited the affliction of his mind. But he remembered the *chimney-sweeper,* and tried to be satisfied. At length his companion being impatient, he was

obliged to take a hasty leave of his beloved relations, and followed by their affectionate wishes for his welfare, accompanied Jeffery Squander with a melancholy heart to dinner, and to SCHOOL.

THE END.

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